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MidnightScans

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KOOTETSU
NO HANA

[illegible] was poor, he was a true samurai who held on to his beliefs.

He was different from all those rotten [illegible] clung onto the "samurai name".

My father was a great samurai.

I wanted to become a true samurai.
—KEIOU-ERA, YEAR FOUR (1868), EDO
PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS...
I DIDN'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, BUT... IN SHORT
I THOUGHT THAT IT COULD BE—
SERIOUSLY
SOUJI...

FROM THIS DAY FORWARD, HE WILL...
...PROBABLY NEVER BE ABLE TO FIGHT AS A MEMBER OF THE SHINSENGUMI*...
HE WON'T...
...BE ABLE TO HANDLE HIS SWORD THE WAY HE USED TO.
* T/N: Shinsengumi is the special security force located in Kyoto and dedicated to suppressing anti-Bakufu activities in the Edo period. (Wikipedia)
THIS IS FINE...
...AS LONG AS I NEVER...
I'm just going to die like this.

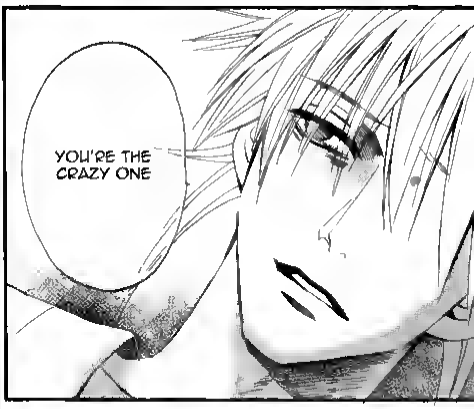
HAVE TO BE A BURDEN TO THAT PERSON WITH THIS HAND...
Are you trying to kill... yourself...
What a sad sight.
Souji...

You are... insane.

TRUTH
...for that guy,
...for Hijikata's sake...?

Every thing changed 13 years ago...
Ever since Hijikata showed up everything has turned inside out
ever since that guy killed my father.

You're so calm.
You have accepted that you are sick and in a hurry to die.
but do you think you can keep me looked away like this?

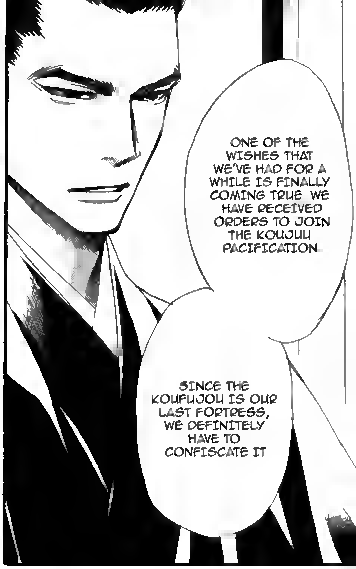

YOU'RE THE CRAZY ONE

YOU ARE JUST A SHADOW THAT I CREATED.
SO I'LL DECIDE WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME.
CREATED?
This body...
...is mine.
I'm the one who created you.
You cannot keep me locked away...
...because...

...THE REAL OKITA SOUJI.
I AM
You...
...me that "didn't know the demon".
I created another...
...weren't able to handle what happened when you were younger, you hid it all deep inside your heart.
SOUJI...

AH,
KONDOU-SENSEI...
I'M COMING IN
HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
I FEEL A LOT BETTER TODAY
SOMEHOW,
HEADING TO KOUSHUU?
YES
WE ARE THINKING OF LEAVING TOMORROW

WHAT ABOUT HIJIKATA-SAN?
IT MEANS THAT WE, THE SHINSENGUMI, WILL PROTECT THE BAKUFU


ONE OF THE WISHES THAT WE'VE HAD FOR A WHILE IS FINALLY COMING TRUE. WE HAVE RECEIVED ORDERS TO JOIN THE KOUJUU PACIFICATION
SINCE THE KOUFUJOU IS OUR LAST FORTRESS, WE DEFINITELY HAVE TO CONFISCATE IT

YOU'D BE SURPRISED IF YOU SEE HIM NOW. HE HAS BOBBED HAIR AND WEARS WESTERN CLOTHING
OF COURSE TOSHI WILL BE COMING TOO.

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE LOST MANY OF OUR COMRADES...
SAITOU AND STILL HERE TOO
BUT HARADA, NAGAKUCHI AND...
NOT JUST TOSHI,

THAT'S RIGHT

THERE IS STILL SO MUCH TO DO

PLEASE...
It still...
..hasn't ended.
Hijikata...
TAKE ME WITH YOU,
CHIEF
It will not end...
.. until I beat you with my own hands.
SOUJI...
IT WON'T END LIKE THIS
TRUTH

I CAN STILL USE MY SWORD. I DEFINITELY
I WILL NOT LOSE
TO AN ILLNESS WHEN THE BAKUFU HAS A SERIOUS MATTER TO ATTEND SEE?
HEY,
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
WILL
SHOW YOU THAT I CAN KILL THE ENEMY
The real Okita Souji...

when I met Hijikata Toshizou...
or a home to return to
family
No, it was
Then...
I...
I'm his shadow?
He saved me.
and I admired him as if he was a true warrior...
I even spent a lot of time with everyone as friends.
Are you telling me that everything..
about me is an illusion...?
THAT'S RIGHT
BANG

!
A SPY?!
PROTECT THE CHIEF!
WHOOSH
HIJIKATA...

!
SCREECH
DAMN
NGH!
CLUNK
CHIEF!

IT WOULD BE TROUBLESOME FOR ME IF YOU D DIE HERE
OR ARE YOU...
ARE YOU...
SOUJI?
HE WAS A SPLENDID PATRIOT
HIJIKATA -SAN!!
...who can take your life.
I am the only one...
YOU TORTURED AND KILLED HIM.
HE WAS CAUGHT BY THE SHINSEN-GUMI
AND...
I M AVENGING MY FRIEND

IF YOU DON'T KILL ME...
I WILL FOLLOW YOU UNTIL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH...
AND I WILL DEFINITELY KILL THAT MAN
I SEE
THERE...
ARE STILL THINGS I HAVE TO DO
THEN,
...I CAN'T LET YOU LIVE.

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO BE KILLED.
WHAT AN IDIOT
SPLATTER
SAITOU, STOP IT!
YOU!
....
ISN'T THE SHINSENGUMI'S LIFE THAT OF A PRECARIOUS STATE ?
...you is destruction...
...and, the only thing that awaits...
Hijikata, you're going to do that just so you can advance forward...
JUST LIKE THAT HE IS CURSED.
HE INTENDS TO STEP OVER MANY CORPSES TO GET WHERE HE NEEDS TO GO

...I will give you your final notice.
Before that happens,
WHAT HAPPENED TO SOUJI?
OKITA?
SPLAT
I AM SOUJI

DAMN...
CLUNK
COUGH
NGH
SOUJI!
IT'S TOO SAD...
OKITA-SENSEI!

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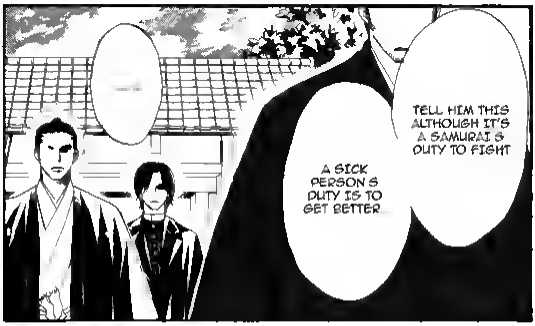
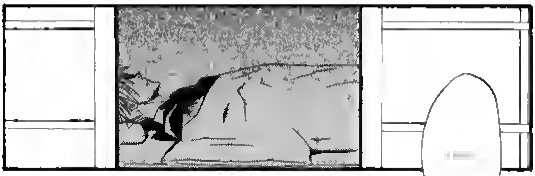
- Midnight Scans Staff

HE WENT OUT TO BATTLE IN THAT CONDITION. YOU SHOULD PRAISE THE FACT THAT HE HAS SUCH A BRILLIANT SPIRIT
OKITA'S BODY IS ALREADY WORN OUT.





IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT
IT'S MINE
IS IT BECAUSE OF HIS ILLNESS ?
I DON'T KNOW
BUT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN HE TURNS INTO A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT PERSON
YOU HAVE A HABIT OF HIDING ANYTHING PAINFUL FROM ME
EVER SINCE BEFORE
EVEN THAT TIME WHEN YOU FIRST KILLED SOMEONE, I HAD TO HEAR IT FROM SOMEONE ELSE
DON'T TRY TO BURDEN YOURSELF WITH THIS RESPONSIBILITY, TOSHI
I WAS NOT IN PAIN
I TOOK CARE OF THE RESPONSIBILITY I WAS GIVEN

WHO TOLD YOU?
THE GIRL OF THE GOFUKU HOUSEHOLD... IN THE TOWN OF OOEN-MACHI...
CAN YOU WAIT UNTIL WE ARE OLD MEN BEFORE WE START TALKING ABOUT THE PAST?
RIGHT NOW, WE NEED TO HURRY AND HEAD TOWARD KOUFU.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,
CHIEF.
THAT WAS THE SAME DAY THAT YOU BROUGHT SOUJI HERE.
RATTLE
YEAH...
SOUJI

T.KUTA
KONDOU-SENSEI CAN YOU
PLEASE TELL ME THAT STORY IN DETAIL...?
Trap

I'LL DEFINITELY COME BACK...
SO UNTIL THEN,
I LEAVE THE SHINSENGUMI... IN YOUR HANDS.
I WILL LEAVE THE POSITION OF
"CHIEF" OPEN FOR YOU

...NO IT BLOOMED FOR A VERY LONG TIME...
THE PLUM HAS ALREADY STOPPED BLOOMING.

I'M SO HAPPY...
I THOUGHT I WOULD NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN...
THE STREAM OF TIME.
YOU CANNOT GO AGAINST...

DID SOUJI...
DISAPPEAR?
NOW,
I CAN DIE.
THE SOUJI WHO ADORED YOU, THE ONE YOU PROTECTED, IS GONE
I AM THE REAL SOUJI
YOU CAN'T KILL ME IN YOUR CURRENT STATE.
STOP IT.

CLA
NK
TWI
!!
CK
CLA
NK

DA—
DAMN
NGH
I CAN'T DIE FOR YOU
THERE
Cough
Cough
Cough
IS SOMEWHERE I MUST GO
WHERE
ARE YOU GOING ?
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING ?

YOU KNEW
KONDOU ISAMI IS ALREADY DEAD. ARE YOU PLANNING ON GOING TO THE SHINSENGUMI WHICH IS NOW JUST A NAME...?
TRUTH
THERE ISN'T EVEN A COMRADE ALIVE SINCE THE FORMATION OF THE SHINSENGUMI
DO YOU WANT TO DIE WITH THE BAKUFU...?
EVEN IF I...
WERE TO KILL YOU NOW...
Sooner or later
THE PLACE WHERE YOU ARE HEADING
ISN'T IT FULL OF DESTRUCTION?
the only thing that awaits us is destruction.
EVEN IF I DO THAT,
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ELSE
BUT IF I DON'T DO THIS...
DIZZY
THEN,
WHY DID I

SWOOSH
Ug
...did I do this...?
I'M SURE THAT... SINCE IT'S YOU,
TOSHI WOULDN'T MIND IF I TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENED...
Why...
COUGH
Up until now,
COUGH
IT HAPPENED ABOUT 10 YEARS AGO
The reason why Toshizou-san had to quit the apprenticeship at this store...
was because I lied...about him laying his hands on me...and the fact that I became pregnant.
My love for him was unrequited...
and then, I spread that rumor
But that's not the only thing.
A guy that...
I was extremely close with believed that lie...

...and that person...said that he was going to kill Toshi-san.
I... couldn't stop him because I was so frightened...
It's too difficult for me to comprehend and I don't really understand it, but...
and they said that he couldn't differentiate the "samurai" that he imagined that he was and...enduring the reality that he was living.
He was poor...
a samurai from some foreign country.
He was...

WHY...?
YOU...
He wasn't at fault...
Everything... was all... my... fault...
THAT YOUR DAD WAS A GREAT SAMURAI...
...RELIEVED.
...was a mistake.
If I admit it, then I'd be...
...accepting that even my existence was a mistake.
WHY...?
UP UNTIL NOW, I HAVE BEEN PLANNING ON SEEKING...
that everything...
I can't forgive the fact...
REVENGE...

Even if he has to go against the wind, even if he is alone,
he will continue to fight for what he believes in.
WHY IS IT...
THAT HE COULDN'T BE A SAMURAI UNTIL THE END!
I HAVE LOST COUNT OF HOW MANY PEOPLE I HAVE SLAYED, BUT
UP UNTIL NOW,
SAMURAI.
THEY WERE ALL...

AS LONG AS I'M A SAMURAI,
THEN I WILL KILL SAMURAI
IT IS BECAUSE WE BOTH HAVE A TEACHER WHO WE HAVE TO SURRENDER TO.
WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU LOSE YOUR TEACHER?
ISN'T YOUR TEACHER KONDOU ISAMI?
THAT IS WHY I CAME HERE
IS FOR ME TO CONTINUE FIGHTING WITH THE SHINSENGUMI UNTIL THE
AFTER I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING THAT I CAN DO, ALL THAT IS LEFT-
EVEN THOUGH THE ENEMY HAS TAKEN HIM, HE IS STILL ALIVE...
I WILL SAVE HIM.

like a flower from a plum tree.
An excellent samurai is...

The man who said that is dead.
WILL YOU HEAL...
MY HEART?
The samurai spirit has been entrusted...to Hijikata.
from the start,
you and I were one.
The time that...
you and I spent together
wasn't an illusion.

"SOUJI".

NO MATTER WHERE I GO,
CHASE AFTER ME SO THAT YOU CAN AVENGE
YOUR FATHER'S DEATH.
As long as there is a reason...
...a samurai...
will continue to fight no matter what.
I WILL
I WILL,
HIJIKAWA-SAN

Thud
CLU
AS EXPECTED...

LET'S GO.
YES!
THE SHINSENGUMI.
I AM OKITA SOUJI AFTER ALL, THE NUMBER ONE BOSS OF
OF COURSE.
Whoosh

KOTETSU NO HANA / THE END

DID YOU HEAR THAT STAFFING IN MIDNIGHT SCANS HAS GOTTEN MORE CHAOTIC THAN EVER?
WE SHOULD LEND THEM A HAND IN RECRUITING FOR MORE SMUT AND SHOUJO RELEASES.
EH... IT CONCERNS ME HOW?
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING LIKE EDITING. CLEANING. TYPESETTING OR PROOF-READING.
ALL I NEED TO DO IS CHARM THEM WITH MY KILLER SMILE!
FINE.. FINE! I'LL HELP!
If you want it, you'll get it!!!
YES. YOU DO THAT...
AND PERHAPS ENSLAVE YOURSELF TO THOSE RABID FANGIRLS. YOU'LL DO FINE!
WHAT?!

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